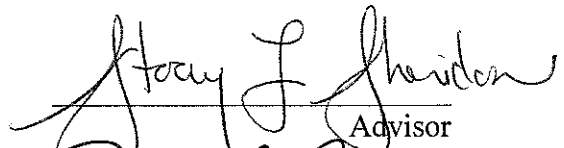
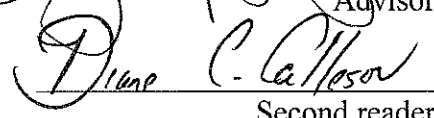


**Violence in the Stands: A Proposal to Decrease Injuries to Soccer Spectators  
Secondary to Fan Violence in Argentina**

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Soccer in Argentina is a post-colonial replacement for knife fighting" -Jorge Luis Borges

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## **Abstract**

**Background:** Sports violence and spectator injuries are problems in all sports, but in the world of soccer (soccer in the United States) the problem has become so prevalent that it consistently threatens the health and safety of spectators. Nowhere is this more the case than in the soccer leagues in South America, and especially Argentina. There the sport is a national pastime and violence is common. At least 50 people were killed between 1980 and 2001 in Argentine soccer related violence.<sup>1</sup> The World Health Organization has called for the world community to treat violence as a public health issue and work at reducing it in all of its forms.<sup>2</sup> The CDC has also decided that violence prevention is a priority<sup>3</sup> and that prevention programs can be efficient and effective. **Purpose:** This paper reviews the evidence on the extent of violence associated with soccer and examines the causes. Past initiatives and programs used to intervene in the problem and makes recommendations for a community-based violence and injury prevention program tailored to an Argentine community. **Methods:** A review of the literature was used to provide a needs assessment, based on the scope of the issue in Argentina. A program is introduced which will consist of a four pronged approach that will incorporate (1) the community, (2) the private sector, (3) the public sector, and (4) the media. The plan and evaluation will address the causes

of the violence and past initiatives used to reduce the violence. These strategies were analyzed with regards to use in an Argentine community, as well as for possible expansion to other communities throughout the country. The review of the literature on soccer violence began with a Medline search of the medical literature, a web-based search focusing on information sites and media reports, and a search of published research found in Davis Graduate Library. The initial search identified the scope of the global problem. We then focused our search on a more local level (i.e. Argentina), where the proposed program will be implemented. **Results:** The literature shows that there is a large problem with regards to spectator violence in Argentine soccer. There is a mortality rate that shows Argentina to have more than 10 times the number of deaths (39 vs. 3) when compared to England, during the late 1990's.<sup>4</sup> There are examples of successful measures in England and other countries in Europe, targeting violence and injury related to soccer. There are few studies that directly address Argentine communities in their attempts to minimize soccer violence. Based on available evidence, an approach that includes improved law enforcement, stadium modifications, and soccer club and soccer governing body involvement in violence prevention seems a reasonable approach to control soccer violence. **Conclusion:** A four-pronged approach that focuses on the public sector, private sector, media, and community is expected to reduce injuries and deaths of soccer spectators in the Argentinian communities in which these events take place.

Additional needs assessment, community recruitment, implementation, and evaluation are now needed.

### **Background**

Fan violence is an entrenched part of the international sport of soccer. It has a long and well-documented history, and this "soccer hooliganism" has become one of the most significant problems facing the world's most popular sport.<sup>5</sup> There are numerous examples of violence in the sport that have led to severe injury or death, including the 1985 Heysel disaster in Brussels, where 39 fans were killed during rioting, and the 1964 riots in Lima, where 318 people were killed.<sup>6</sup> More recently, in 2001, 100 people were killed in riots during a match in Accra, Ghana.<sup>7</sup> Lives lost and injuries are not the only costs; there are also economic costs from property damage, heightened security, and medical care as a result of these events that occur both in and outside of the stadium.

There are many reasons for the soccer violence, including the characteristics of soccer spectators and the spectators are primarily male with extreme enthusiasm for the game. A soccer violence scholar, Eric Dunning, believes the soccer spectator experience allows male violence to occur because of the intense excitement combined with the rivalry of the game. For those with poor self-control themselves, this may lead to hatred of not only the opposing team but also

the opposing fans. Dunning also believes that "hooligans" tend to structure themselves around the structural fault lines of society, made up of race, religion, socio-economics, and region.<sup>8</sup>

Local or regional rivalries in a particular country can contribute to fan violence, but there also are international episodes where supporters from two countries will interact in violent episodes. This occurs during world championship events such as the World Cup, as well as other international events. The English have had multiple episodes abroad, and this violence has led to labeling of the problem as a "British disease".<sup>9</sup> In England, there is not only a long history of playing the sport, but also a long history of fan violence, since the sport's beginnings in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>10</sup>

Though violence has occurred all over the world, few countries have adequately addressed the problem. The English have been most responsive to it, passing legislation and developing schools for study of soccer violence. An example is The Sir Norman Chester Center for Soccer Research at the University of Leicester. The center was created and new legislation was passed in the 1980's and 1990's, when soccer violence seemed to be a daily occurrence in the country. Problems with violence were also occurring in places such as Italy, Germany, and Holland, as well as Ghana and South Africa. None responded as quickly as England. Attention to the problem led to numerous policy decisions and public investments that resulted in a decrease in violent episodes; arrests and violence in

the stadium have now become almost non-existent in Great Britain.<sup>11</sup> A study by the University of Leicester showed that there were only three soccer murders in England during the years between 1996 and 1999. Unfortunately, during this same time, there were 39 murders related to Argentine soccer.<sup>12</sup> (See table 1, pg. 33) In this country there is still a great need to increase the focus on this problem.

This paper examines the causes and scope of the problem of soccer violence in Argentina, reviews measures and programs introduced in other countries to control soccer violence, and introduces a needs assessment, outcome objectives and program framework that could be implemented in a selected Argentine community. This also will lay the foundation for an injury prevention program. Goals, program theory, and implementation plans are included.

This program in this paper will not be implemented, but is a model for a plan that may be expanded and acted upon in the future by prevention practitioners as well as emergency practitioners within the field of event medicine. The goal for this paper was to understand the causation and scope of the issue, determine what prevention measures had been used in the past, and provide the framework for a program to address the problem. With this public health approach a more comprehensive response to the challenge of spectator violence in the world of Argentine soccer may be achieved.



### **Data gathering**

The review of the literature on soccer violence began with a Medline search of the medical literature, a web-based search focusing on information sites and media reports, and a search of published research found in Davis Graduate Library. The search for this information was conducted during January, February and March of 2004. The Medline search included all articles published since 1990 and web-based articles reports were also limited to those since 1990. Language barriers resulted in a decision to not contact the Argentine Soccer Association and at this date there are no comparable institutions, similar to the Norman Chester Center, within Argentina, currently collecting data on the issue. Specifics concerning the literature and web-based searches for each of our questions regarding soccer violence are detailed below.

### ***Overview of the problem***

A web-based search using Yahoo and Google, began with insertion of the terms: "soccer hooliganism," "soccer violence," "soccer hooliganism," "soccer violence," "soccer spectator injury," and "soccer spectator injury." I also queried web sites that I knew focused on the area: The Norman Chester Center of Soccer Research and the Social Issues Research Center. Also to support this information, I used several articles from online news sites such as the BBC, CNN, and Sports Illustrated that included soccer hooliganism and soccer violence in the text. The

medical literature search using Medline found no articles relevant to the issue of soccer violence. In Davis Library, I obtained several books and other literature documenting soccer hooliganism.

### ***Causation***

The search of the literature for causes of the problem produced several newspaper articles that were concerned with reasons for the violence and injuries. Web sites included the Sir Norman Chester Center and the Social Issues Research Center, both in Great Britain. Unfortunately, I found very few relevant articles in the medical literature using a Medline search. 17 books and articles from Davis Library containing information concerned with causation are the main resources for this paper.

### ***Scope of the problem***

Several newspaper articles and web sites reported numbers of deaths and injuries, as well as examples of soccer violence in Argentina. I contacted Kant Bangdawala, a UNC Injury Researcher, was contacted and he suggested that data on problem scope is often found in newspaper articles. I also contacted J.M. Williams, who is one of the primary researchers at the Leicester Center for Soccer Research in England. He noted that the scope of soccer violence in South America and Argentina was not information for which his institution had access

### ***Past initiatives***

Next I focused on research concerned with past interventions to alleviate injuries related to soccer violence in both Argentina and other countries. I found no articles in Medline, concerned with soccer hooliganism, fan-related violence, or interventions to prevent this violence. I then searched Yahoo for specific sites related to the field of soccer violence in order to examine interventions that have been attempted in the past. The information on interventions comes primarily from Great Britain and Europe. The effectiveness of these programs is examined.

### ***Prevention planning***

Finally, I conducted a Medline search to identify relevant studies and programs initiated to minimize community violence. Several of these programs are well developed and effective and they were helpful in the development of this program for Argentina.

## **A Review of the Literature on Soccer Violence**

### ***Background concerning the problem and its causes***

Soccer violence has been a part of the subculture of the sport since it began. In medieval times in Europe, the sport pitted villages against each other to settle old feuds and personal disagreements. Edward III actually banned the sport for fear that these rivalries could lead to civil unrest.<sup>13</sup> Many refer to these historical issues when they attempt explain why there is such a problem with violence related to the sport today.

There are three stages of the violence: The first is generally directed at players and referees, the second involves violence between opposing groups of fans and police officers inside the stadium, and the third stage involves these same groups outside the stadium. Most of the problems occur in home countries, but there is sporadic violence at events abroad.<sup>14</sup> In this section, I will first provide an overview of soccer violence in England, since this is the country where the problem has been most studied and where the response has been most effective. I will also provide an overview of Argentina, which will be the location of program implementation. The large burden that soccer spectator violence places on Argentina, when compared to other countries in Europe will be displayed throughout this paper. Unfortunately there is very little information and documentation concerning the problem in other Latin American countries, which would be helpful in determining the importance of a prevention program for Argentina compared to other countries in this cultural region. The amount of information concerning Argentina leads me to conclude that the violence burden in this country is rather large compared to other countries in the region.

### *England*

In England, where the violence has been most studied, a Center for the study of soccer violence is helping to understand and combat the problem.<sup>15</sup> Many English scholars believe that social issues play a large part in the violence. For example, the decline of the British Empire in the 1950s and an expected economic

boom that did not materialize following World War II led to general insecurity and xenophobia by frustrated youth, who caused the violence in the early years of its modern manifestation.<sup>16</sup> A Marxist view is that it is the working classes who tend to participate in this modern form of the problem. The thinking is that much of the violence is due to frustration with the sport's growing popularity with the middle and upper classes, combined with the commercialization and sponsorship of the sport required to keep teams competitive has led to violent acts revolving around the sport. The violent reactions found among spectators have not been unique to England, but have also occurred in other countries who experienced social upheaval and change. Examples include Scotland, Ireland, Spain, and Italy.<sup>17</sup> In Europe it is thought that violence occurs at about 10% of matches, but this is by no means a "British disease", nor one solely in Europe for that matter, since every nation in which the sport is played has experienced some form of violence.

<sup>18</sup>

### ***Latin America and Argentina***

Though there are many problems in Europe (primarily in England), the problem is also endemic in South America and most notoriously Argentina. There have been reports of violence and spectator injuries in Argentina since the early 1900's, soon after the introduction of the game in this region of the world. In 1910 alone, a Boca match was halted after spectators invaded the soccer field.<sup>19</sup> In 2002, there were five deaths and dozens of shotgun and knife injuries.<sup>20</sup>

Argentina is plagued by crowd violence, and the violence sometimes seems more sinister and deep-rooted than the violence in other countries.<sup>21</sup> Many times league play has been stopped due to concerns with escalating violence that threatened to compromise fan safety.<sup>22</sup>

Pablo Alabarces, a soccer scholar, notes that there are three main forms of violence in Argentine soccer. First, there is violence due to hooliganism, which is linked to the re-emergence of the modern form of violence in the 1960's; this violence may be random and may involve politics and/or opposing teams. Second, there is violence in response to police violence that is inflicted on spectators. And third, there is violence that is a confrontation between rivals of different clubs as they trespass and defend territory.<sup>23</sup> Early on, the violence was directed primarily towards referees and opposing players, but the violence now involves mostly police and spectators.<sup>24</sup>

### **Other Common Problem Characteristics**

This sport has several aspects that make it a breeding ground for violence and spectator harm. They include fanaticism, male domination, commercialization, racism, the stadium design and spectator control, alcohol, the media and politics, and finally hooliganism.

#### ***Fanaticism***

The sport is followed with a fanaticism that is unparalleled in sports, with community, state, and national loyalties involved in many aspects of everyday life. In numerous countries, soccer is the main spectator pastime with a very intense focus from those who follow the sport. The events are highly ritualistic; songs and chants are synchronized and an almost carnivalesque environment is created. One author believes that this environment displays a loss of all forms of polite conduct and discourse; in other words, anything goes.<sup>25</sup> Robson believes that people in polite society become committed to specific institutions and practices because they find them meaningful. Then, following an event such as a soccer match, they will be charged up, confirmed, and strengthened, and they take the experience with them when they return to the mundane.<sup>26</sup> This is part of the problem in much of the world where soccer violence occurs. The individuals involved feel important or empowered during the event, and many times it is violent acts that precipitate these emotions.

### ***Male Domination***

The sport is mainly the domain of men and largely involves men, as both spectators and participants. This occurs in the most liberal and the most conservative countries and it can lead to an aggressiveness that ultimately translates into soccer violence. It is not the individual male but instead the groups of males interacting and expressing themes of machismo, competition, physical emotion. Many times when these emotions are displayed, it can often lead to

physical confrontation that has become a part of the soccer spectator experience. Coddington believes that men not only guard the game jealously, but also have developed the view that the only real soccer fan is a male; and this keeps women away from the sport and may add to the aggressiveness and violent actions.<sup>27</sup> In England, only 12% of the individuals watching top level soccer matches are female.<sup>28</sup> Other parts of the world, such as South America mirrors this. The males who tend to cause trouble often come from backgrounds where openly aggressive and violent expressions of masculinity are accepted.<sup>29</sup> Taylor believes that in England, this problem is not only due to social class and upbringing, but also to a troubled state of English masculinity where an unregulated kind of brutishness is expressed.<sup>30</sup> Others believe that soccer cannot be disconnected from other forms of violence, as well as the gender system that condones these forms of masculinity.<sup>31</sup>

### ***Commercialization***

Soccer is not only a sport, but also a business in which the highest level of play is rewarded with large sums of money, and teams require large sums to remain competitive. Therefore large numbers of fans are required and encouraged to support their selected club. This leads to stadiums that are usually overflowing with spectators. Clubs allow fanaticism since they know how much the fans mean to the financial success of the team. The clubs also recognize also how much influence the supporters can have and therefore do not punish violent behavior.<sup>32</sup>



### ***Racism***

Racism at times appears to be a part of soccer violence, but there seems to be little evidence of this in South America, where the friction seems to be more socioeconomic. Racism is a problem in Britain and other countries in Europe. Many of the individuals involved in "hooligan activities" are closely related to organizations such as the British National Party, a nationalist group associated with far right views and racist tendencies. This has led to a decrease in involvement in the sport and in attendance at events, for fear of violent racist treatment. In April 2001, "Soccer Hooligans" from two clubs marched into neighborhood in Oldham, England, to begin the worst British race riots in over 30 years.<sup>33</sup> Why racism has become a part of the soccer culture is unclear. I believe that those involved appear to be the same individuals who continue to fuel the problem in the United States. Often these are individuals with a poor educational background and employment security that fosters a lack of security where these racist tendencies flourish. The anger towards others and racist activities have found an environment, which is soccer spectatorship, where these individuals have traditionally participated and where it seems these feelings have been tolerated.

### ***Unsafe Stadia***

Poor, outdated, and unsafe stadia that allow a mob mentality by allowing fans to stand and congregate in areas, while disregarding safe capacity, are a problem

that is a threat to the safety of spectators. Historically, people would stand to watch the matches; that has continued today in much of the world. The cheapest seats are in areas referred to as "terraces." Terraces are concrete standing areas that are stepped in order to allow spectators view the field without obstruction from fans in descending rows. It is here in the "terraces" where much of the violence and injuries occur during soccer matches. These areas not only allow almost anyone to afford the events, but they also increase the capacity of the stadium by selling admission to areas where only standing is allowed, often filling a stadium far beyond its capacity. It appears that clubs believe it is in their best interest to include as many spectators as possible at an event, in order to increase gate revenues. Also, the inclusion of as many fans as possible can have an effect on the success of the club by influencing play and securing fans for the future.

Fan behavior in the past has led to the construction of retaining fences to segregate fans from opposing fans, as well as from the field of play which contains the players and referees, who at times are the victims of violence. These so-called improvements have many times led to disastrous results, such as the Heysel and Hillsborough tragedies. In Heysel Stadium, in Brussels, during a riot between fans in 1985, a wall collapsed killing 39 spectators and injuring many more.<sup>34</sup> In Hillsborough Stadium in England, 95 people were crushed to death following the opening of gates to alleviate overcrowding.<sup>35</sup>

Such events continue to take place in stadia that are not only outdated with regard to safety and desired capacity, but are also unsafe due to age and disrepair. This is another issue that is not well policed by the clubs themselves, or by as the governing bodies of the sport or nation. It is usually too late when these issues are attended to, following some major disaster in which numerous individuals are injured or even killed. Examples are the previously discussed Heysel and Hillsborough events. It seems, with regards to the literature, that there rarely are consequences with regards to a club's liability, and many do not have the funds with which to make improvements.

### ***Barras Bravas and Hooliganism***

Organized gangs and clubs that make up core spectator support for many teams in Europe and South America have also been identified as part of the problem with regards to spectator violence in these countries. The violence in South American and particularly Argentine soccer cannot be discussed without reference to the "Barras Bravas," a very organized group of individuals who are a combination of fan club and Mafia.<sup>36</sup> In Italy, the Ultras, a similar group, are involved in much of the violence in that country's soccer culture. Boca alone, it is said, has an organized group of 2000 members and the group has an appalling record of violence and use of weapons.<sup>37</sup> Barras Bravas are loosely defined as brave "wildmen" or brave warriors, from the Spanish; and they have played a part in Latin American soccer and politics for many years. In Argentina, the groups

were first organized in 1929.<sup>38</sup> They have been an integral part of the sport ever since; and along with Hinchas, who are more concerned with banners, fireworks, and general support of the club, they make up the core of club support.<sup>39</sup> Unlike the Hinchas, however, the Bravas are expected to confront their opposites on the other side by stealing banners as trophies and fighting for the honor of the club.<sup>40</sup> Clubs believe that this support is necessary and they reward these groups by giving them free tickets and paying travel expenses to opposing stadiums. The groups are often rented out by government and club officials, in order to engage in acts of intimidation.<sup>41</sup> These organized clubs or bands of supporters wield considerable political power since as members of the club, they can help with the support and elevation of individuals to political leadership positions within the club. This in turn can lead to electoral political office, since soccer politics is usually a springboard to Argentine local and national politics. In Argentina, there have always been major links between the leadership of the Boca Bravas and elected office holders.<sup>42</sup>

The term hooligan is used to refer to those who caused trouble and vandalism. It originated from an Irish family by the name of Houlihan who terrorized London in the 1920's.<sup>43</sup> Kerr uses reversal theory to explain the actions of these individuals during soccer matches. Reversal theory focuses on how complex, changeable, and inconsistent a person's behavior can be from one situation to another.<sup>44</sup> This theory also focuses on arousal, excitement seeking, and risk taking

as paramount to the "hooligan" makeup.<sup>45</sup> Gabler did a study in Stuttgart during the 1979-80 season in which he found that 20% of fans deliberately sought out dangerous situations, and a byproduct was often aggression.<sup>46</sup> Another study by Van Limbergen concluded that Belgian soccer hooligans were motivated by the risks involved in "war games" with other hooligans and police.<sup>47</sup>

### ***Alcohol***

Often, alcohol and drugs tend to contribute to the violence. Advertising and sales, as well as a laxity in the enforcement of stadium regulations, has led to many problems in which alcohol can be identified as the culprit. Alcohol is very much related to violent episodes, as well as the hooligan persona of the soccer fan. Nowhere is this more the case than in England, where 27% of arrests at soccer matches are related to alcohol.<sup>48</sup> In a 1999 study, Harvard researchers analyzed questionnaires of sports fans and non sports fans and found that many more of the sports fans participated in binge drinking, reported alcohol related problems, and had a heavy drinking style.<sup>49</sup> Another study, from the University of Colorado, found that season ticket holders for a Boulder, Colorado, sporting venue had negative attitudes when alcohol was banned from sale during sporting events.<sup>50</sup>

### ***Ineffective Policing***

The police and their relationships to soccer spectators, and to other Argentine citizens are another cause for this country's soccer violence. It is thought many

times that the police provoke violence rather than restraining it.<sup>51</sup> More than 50% of the soccer deaths between 1958 and 1992 involved fans and the police, not fans and fans. This may be due to the fact that in Argentine society the police are controversial, with a long history of confrontations with citizens, unlike Great Britain where police- spectator violence is not nearly as common.<sup>52</sup> The lack of laws has been of concern to the authorities in Argentina. Many of the injuries and deaths secondary to the violence go uninvestigated and unpunished. In only 12 of the 118 deaths between 1958 and 1992 were individuals tried and convicted, and only 4 police were found guilty in the deaths of spectators.<sup>53</sup> Also, the government has had a difficult time influencing decisions involving soccer and its safety, for fear of backlash from the spectators and organized groups of fans.

### ***Socio-political***

Major causes of the violence found in the sport are social and political. Much like other parts of the world, people's frustrations are voiced as spectators, and in no other country is this voice louder than in Argentina. Political changes that have occurred numerous times have led to volatility that crosses over to the soccer arena. The citizen's fear of corruption and conspiracy has led to some of these actions, with the hope of restoring justice and fairness, at least on the field. The violence is often targeted at those in power, such as police, referees, and journalists.<sup>54</sup> The population has developed a form of tribal soccer in which, like all rituals, the normal rules of social order are suspended and then the ritual then

becomes violent. People, who are desperate, politically or economically, may think the only way of gaining visibility is with violent actions.<sup>55</sup> And stadiums in Argentina are have become the stage where the media amplifies the violence that occurs.<sup>56</sup>

### ***Media***

Media sensationalization has also contributed to fan violence. Throughout the soccer world there are books, magazines, dailies, television and radio programs, and Internet sites dedicated to the sport. No only do these outlets focus on the players and events, but they also tend to sensationalize and glorify the violence in the sport and this often overshadows the game, itself. The causes of the problem of soccer violence have had little study in Argentina, unlike in the United Kingdom, but these causes have been much covered in journalistic and political circles,<sup>57</sup> It is media coverage in the UK and Europe that often incites some of the behavior by the crowd. The media often fail to recognize the problem and incidents are discussed for a few days and then dropped. For example, a 38-year-old was killed during a match between Estudiantes and Huracan, in La Plata, and his death was barely discussed.<sup>58</sup> This type of coverage shows that the problem is a part of everyday life, which could make it harder to reduce the problem.

At the same time, the media also are guilty of inciting the crowd in Argentina, by front page sensationalizing, which is similar to the situation in Europe. They refer to individuals participating in the violence as wild beasts or animals, and

give them the attention that many of them crave. The media add to the hype surrounding a match by discussing how police are going to cope and what law enforcement techniques will be used to minimize the violence. Once violence occurs, the media are proven correct and relish in self-fulfilling prophecies.<sup>59</sup> Many believe that this is recognition that those involved in the violence seek.

The popular press or tabloids have become frontrunners in following the behavior of fans and it is believed by some that this form of media has played a part of some importance of the direction of hooligan behavior, mainly by glorification.<sup>60</sup> The reputations of those involved in violent actions are magnified and this may motivate violent individuals searching for some find of notoriety. It has been reported that during an event in Italy, an English fan could get drunk and parade all day singing the national anthem, and then read a document of his behavior, in paper the next day.<sup>61</sup>

### **Current Initiatives in Response to the Violence**

I found very little information concerning past initiatives implemented in order to decrease fan violence and injury at soccer matches. Most initiatives are found in England, where government and law enforcement took it upon themselves to create a plan and laws that would decrease the problems in the stands and surrounding these events. Most of what occurred in England was reactive, however, no true plan developed to cope with this issue.<sup>62</sup> The beginning of the rise in legislation was due to the Taylor Report, issued in response to the



Hillsborough disaster in which 96 fans died due to overcrowding in the stadium.<sup>63</sup> Even though violence was not the primary issue and the disaster was the result of poor crowd control and overcrowding, this report began the process that of addressing the problem of violence and the safety of spectators, with regards to the sport of soccer. Injury prevention components included in the Taylor report are discussed below.<sup>64</sup>

### *All- Seating Stadiums*

All-seating stadiums have resulted in a dramatic decrease in soccer violence; indeed, violence inside the grounds has become almost non-existent. One of the main requirements of the Taylor report was that all stadiums to improve viewing areas so that all spectators have an assigned seat, corresponding to a held ticket. Terraces, which were standing areas in most stadiums in the world, were difficult to control and crowding and violence were commonplace. Order was lost in these areas, fans could mingle and interact freely, and this crowds to overwhelm security and the capacity of the stadiums. This was a place to start and the change has been very successful in changing the environment in these venues. In addition, the arrests for soccer related crimes have also dropped.<sup>65</sup>

### *Stricter laws with regards to spectator violence*

Other requirements of the Taylor Report were laws that were to deal with the offences related to soccer matches.<sup>66</sup> These laws have given more power to the

judicial and law enforcement branches to help deter soccer violence. First, the Public Disorder Act of 1986 allowed courts to make exclusion orders banning fans from stadiums. Next, the Soccer Spectators Act of 1989 allowed courts to impose restriction orders on fans convicted of soccer violence. Third the Soccer Offences Act 1991 created new offences related to soccer spectatorship. These were not limited to fighting with police or others, which had been the main punishable offences in the past. The new offences included disorderly behavior, throwing missiles, indecent or racist chanting as well as going onto the field. Fourth, the Soccer Act of 1999 required courts to make banning orders if certain criteria such as past convictions and severity of offence were met. If no banning order had been handed down, the banning board would have to explain in court why a banning order was not applied to the situation. Lastly, the Soccer Disorder Act of 2000 abolished the distinction between international and domestic banning orders.<sup>67</sup> This act made it a banning offense if an individual was involved in and convicted of spectator violence, regardless of whether the event occurred in England or abroad. The banning order would then be in effect for all soccer matches, whether they take place in England or abroad, involving English teams.

### ***Surveillance cameras***

CCTV or closed caption television has been used widely in England and Europe to monitor the spectator sections. They serve three purposes. First, they

allow police and stadium security to respond quickly to situations in all areas of the grounds, when violence related information is relayed quickly from a control room. Second, the fan's knowledge of the system and response to the problem also aids in controlling behavior. And lastly, the system provides evidence for prosecutions of soccer-related offenses, which result in incarceration and banning orders. Inglis feels that with the new CCTV cameras and other measures in place in English soccer stadiums, one may be safer from assault there than in a hospital or inner city comprehensive school.<sup>68</sup> The introduction of CCTV to stadiums throughout the UK has almost eliminated hooliganism inside the largest stadiums.<sup>69</sup>

### ***Alcohol Ban***

In England, the 1985 Sporting Offenses Act addressed alcohol use by fans and spectator violence. It banned the sale and consumption at matches and denied entry to soccer stadiums for individuals under the influence of alcohol. This initiative became widespread throughout Europe as well, since many governments and researchers have demonstrated a relationship between alcohol and violence.

### ***Increase in police manpower***

Police manpower has been increased in England, as well as the rest of Europe. Understandably, this has greatly decreased spectator violence in the stadia.

<sup>70</sup>Increased policing targeting the hooligan element has led to employment of Soccer Intelligence Officers (FIO) who look at policing difficulties for upcoming matches and grade these events with regard to potential problems. These officers also have knowledge of individuals attending and traveling to matches and can relay this information to police and security responsible for a particular event.<sup>71</sup>

### ***Stewards in the stands***

Another reaction to the violence by the European soccer clubs was the hiring of private security stewards. These stewards patrol the spectator areas and supplement the police force, traditionally responsible for fan safety and management. These individuals do not have arrest powers, but as employees of the club they could have spectators banned from the grounds.<sup>72</sup>

### ***Segregation***

Segregation has been implemented throughout Europe and England in order to keep opposing fans from contacting each other before, during, and after matches. Police escort fans to and from stadiums during away matches. These fans enter into another entrance, to minimize contact with opposing fans and seating often utilizes fencing as a barrier between these fans.<sup>73</sup>

### ***Identification schemes***

The identification schemes, where all spectators to soccer matches would be required to have an identification card issued by the club which they support, were discussed in England during the 1980's, but lost a lot of support at the time

of the other reforms in the United Kingdom. The plans rely on the theory that individuals hoping to make trouble could be kept out by identifying them at the entrance. Beginning in Leicester in 1985, membership is restricted for those who had been involved in trouble in the past with much success. Those who wanted to see orderly play obtained cards and those who wanted to make disorder would not. Since then, the stadium in Leicester has been almost trouble free, and police involvement has become much less needed.<sup>74</sup>

### ***Community programs***

The goal of community programs is to attract families and females to become spectators of soccer.<sup>75</sup> England initiated a community program in October of 1989, in the schools, in clubs, and in community centers. By creating a more family-like atmosphere and reduce the masculinity that seemed to define the sport, this was thought to be a way of curbing the violence, but there is no evidence of the success found with this intervention.

### ***Play suspension***

Play suspension has occurred several times in Argentina and seems to be one of the few interventions attempted on a regular basis in Argentina. Play was stopped in both 1998 and 1999 in Argentina, by judges fearful that the increasing

lack of control of fans and escalating violence would become a general lack of disorder throughout the country. There were several deaths previous to these measures, but the measures were successful in controlling the problem, at the time.<sup>76</sup> Yet there was a huge loss of revenue by the clubs and the lack of continuity once play resumed, and the root of the problem had not been resolved.

### ***Summary***

In summary, there are several potential components that may be an effective part of a larger intervention to reduce fan violence. There is little basis for determining which components are most effective.

### **Program plan**

In the following section, I will discuss the need for this program and the scope of the issue in the community where I have chosen to implement the plan. I also will introduce a plan based on previously implemented initiatives that I believe will be effective in Argentina, community that has some of the highest injury and death rates due to fan violence throughout the soccer world. My proposed program is based on a four pronged approach towards violence prevention with focus on the community (La Boca), the private (soccer club and governing federations), the media, and finally the public (federal and local lawmakers and law enforcement). The multi-pronged approach is one that has been adopted by public health experts and officials as an effective way to prevent violence before

it occurs. This is in opposition to the criminal justice approach that relies on incarceration and punishment, and instead focuses on changing social, behavioral and environmental factors and integrating efforts of several organizations and communities.<sup>77</sup> The goal is to develop a program that will effectively lower the prevalence of events that bring high spectator morbidity and mortality.

### *Need for program*

Though there are many problems in Europe and primarily England, the problem of soccer violence is endemic in South America and most notoriously Argentina. There have been reports of violence and spectator injuries in Argentina since the early 1900's, soon after the introduction of the game in this region of the world. In 1910 alone, a Boca match was halted following a invasion of the field by fans.<sup>78</sup> In 2002 there were five deaths and dozens of shotgun and knife injuries.<sup>79</sup> Argentina is plagued by crowd violence; and sometimes it seems more sinister and deep-rooted, then violence in other locales such as Europe.<sup>80</sup> Many times league play has been stopped due to concerns with escalating violence that threatens to compromise fan safety.

Alabarces notes that there are three main forms of violence in Argentine soccer. First there is the violence due to hooliganism, linked to the re-emergence of the modern form of violence in the 1960's. This violence can be random and can be a result of politics or between supporters of opposing teams. Second, there is violence in response to police violence that is inflicted on spectators. And third,

there is violence that involves confrontations between rivals of different clubs as they trespass and defend territory.<sup>81</sup> Early on, the violence was directed towards referees and opposing players, but the violence now present involves mostly police and spectators.<sup>82</sup> The problem has had little study in Argentina, but it has been much covered in the journalistic and political circles.<sup>83</sup> It is the media coverage that, as in the UK and Europe, incites some of the crowd behavior.

There are also social and political causes of the violence found in the sport. Much as in other parts of the world, people's frustrations are voiced as spectators. The citizen's fear of corruption and conspiracy has led to some of these actions, with the hopes of restoring justice and fairness, at least on the field. The violence is often targeted towards those in power, such as police, referees, and journalists.<sup>84</sup> For a population that is desperate, politically or economically, many see the only way of gaining notice is by violent actions that increase visibility.<sup>85</sup>

The lack of laws has also been of concern to the authorities in Argentina. Many of the injuries and deaths secondary to the violence go uninvestigated and unpunished. In 12 of the 118 deaths between 1958 and 1992, were individuals tried and convicted and only 4 police were found guilty in the deaths of spectators.<sup>86</sup>

Spectator violence in Argentina is due to a minority of fans who look at the violence as a way to defend their turf from opposing fans, in an environment in which violence is a prevalent part of daily life. The violence is compounded by



organized fans known as "Barras Bravas", who have based fanship on intimidation and violence against other fans. All of the violence takes place in and around poorly maintained stadiums, where fan management is inadequate and police and stadium security is not effective. There is a lack of resources, manpower, strict laws, and leadership that could deter violence. This violence has become a significant part of the spectator experience. The media have compounded the problem by magnifying this violence and its place in an Argentine society, where many males are seeking notoriety, and in the fragile economic environment, many are fearful and mistrusting of the historically corrupt government and the legal system.

As noted earlier, in 2002 alone there were five deaths and dozens of shotgun and knife injuries related to soccer violence in Argentina.<sup>87</sup> This violence makes the country an ideal location for a violence prevention program. As shown in the review above, Argentina has a great interest in the game of soccer and there are many causes for the violence and spectator injuries that continue to burden the game. The rates of injury and death rival those in any location in the world and though they have been present for a time, they have recently become much worse, which will be discussed in the following section. This section will discuss the issue in Argentina, Buenos Aires, and La Boca, the community in which the proposed program will be implemented.

Argentina is a South American country with a population of 32.6 million. One third of the population lives in the province of Buenos Aires, located on the central Atlantic coast of the country, south of the mouth of the Rio Plate River. There are soccer fans and stadia throughout the country, but most of the problems are centered on the rivalries found in Buenos Aires. Many of the major soccer clubs are in the capitol and 17 stadiums are home to some of the more prominent clubs. Many of these stadiums hold more than 40,000 spectators. It is here where La Boca is located and the Boca Juniors have their greatest fan base of support. Although the support is largest here, fans throughout the country follow the fortunes of the Buenos Aires Clubs.

Through the years soccer violence has been a huge issue for the Argentine population, but the largest burden has been on those in the capital. The first episodes were documented in the beginning of the organized game, and they have increase over the last 50 years. Early on the episodes involved aggression towards players and opposing players, but they rapidly developed into problems between opposing fans.

Alabarces reports that over the course of the 68 years between 1930 and 1998, 137 people were killed during soccer related violence in Argentina. An even more important statistic is the estimated 20,000 injuries that have occurred related to this violence.<sup>88</sup> Violence has often led to the cessation and suspension of all soccer matches in the country.<sup>89</sup> Another paper reported 55 deaths secondary to

acts of violence between 1958 and 1992 and stated that 60% of those deaths were related to police/spectator violence and 40% to spectator/spectator violence.<sup>90</sup> One sentinel event in the history of injury in the Argentine game occurred in June 1968, when 74 people were killed and 150 were injured during frantic rushes for the gates during spectator and police induced-violence. The match was between the two main teams in Buenos Aires, Boca and River Plate.<sup>91</sup>

In 2002, the soccer violence issue was again an extensive problem for the authorities in Argentina. A BBC report focused on the fact that 5 months into the season, five individuals had already been killed during spectator violence and dozens more casualties had resulted from knife and shotgun wounds.<sup>92</sup> Dunning et al, showed that other parts of the soccer world where violence has been an issue could not compare with Argentina with regards to the number of deaths reported at the end of the 1990's. (Table 1)<sup>93</sup>

Table 1

Soccer related deaths reported in English Newspapers-June 1996-October 1999

Argentina	39
England	3
Italy	5
Netherlands	1

Sources: TheTimes, The Leicester Mercury, The Guardian, The Observer, The Sunday Times

Violent events that are related to Argentine soccer do not always occur on Argentine soil which may show that the culture of Argentina at times is transported to other countries where a large scale violence occurs. Three of the worst stadium disasters on the continent have involved Argentine national teams as they played against teams from three different countries. In 1955, 6 people were killed when people attempted to overfill a stadium in Santiago, Chile, for a tournament final between Argentina and Chile. In 1964, the largest disaster in Latin American soccer history and one of the largest in world sports history occurred in Lima, Peru, following a match in which Argentina beat Peru: 318 people were killed and 500 were injured in riots following the match.<sup>94</sup> A third disaster occurred when the Argentine team played in Columbia in 1982; 22 were killed and 200 were injured during clashes between fans.<sup>95</sup>

There is clearly a problem with Argentine soccer; the violence has led to numerous deaths and countless injuries over the years, and officials have at times banned play. Building on those reports and statistics, a program development team would need to conduct a proper needs assessment before implementation of the program.

### ***Program location***

In developing a program to improve the safety of soccer supporters, the number of arrests is not the only concern; rather, the main concern is the behaviors that lead to episodes in which large numbers of spectators are injured.

Events such as stampedes, terrace collapses, and riots all result from the lack of a comprehensive fan violence program.

Buenos Aires is the capitol province and city of Argentina. There are 16 stadiums in the city and most hold more than 30,000 spectators.<sup>96</sup> The program presented here will be designed for a large community within Buenos Aires, with the expectation that the program can be introduced to other communities, with some tailoring for the specific location.

La Boca is a large working class neighborhood located west of the central city along the Riachuelo, which is a narrow waterway lined with meatpackers, warehouses, and shipping concerns. The population is in the thousands and is historically made up of Italian immigrants and members of the working class, of whom 25% live below the poverty level.<sup>97</sup> The central focus of the neighborhood is the Boca Juniors Soccer Club, which has been a fixture in Argentine and world soccer for 99 years, since 1905.<sup>98</sup> The club is not only supported by fans in this community, but also draws fans from all over Argentina as well.<sup>99</sup> I have chosen this location because of the prominent position that it has within the soccer culture of Argentina that will possibly allow for greater publicity and greater abundance of resources, based on endorsements and its position within the premiership league. Also, the fact that many events in the past have concerned spectators and clubs connected to this community.

As in other similar communities in Argentina, soccer in La Boca is a focal part of life. The Boca Juniors are a Primera League club, which puts them in the highest league of Argentine and South American professional soccer. Membership in this league is based primarily on population and financial stability/support. This also puts the team in the highest profile category throughout the soccer community. This "premier league" also has the largest number of spectators and violent events resulting in spectator injury.

Like other soccer clubs, the La Boca team and neighborhood experience their share of injury and violence during soccer matches. The violence has led judges in the past to halt play by teams throughout the city, most notably in La Boca, to attempt to ensure the safety of spectators.<sup>100</sup> There have been events in which knives and clubs were so prevalent that the security police involved were unable to protect the fans.<sup>101</sup>

The stadium where the team plays its matches is the Camilo Cichero Stadium or "La Bombonera"; a large three-tiered, horseshoe shaped stadium that was built in 1940.<sup>102</sup> The venue can accommodate up to 60,245 spectators and often surpasses this capacity.<sup>103</sup> Multi-tiered terraces on which spectators are allowed to stand are found in several areas of the stadium, and it is in these areas where many of the inner stadium injuries occur. These fixtures of Argentine soccer were phased out of English and Scottish stadiums following the Hillsborough disaster.<sup>104</sup>

One of the major concerns in La Boca and its stadiums is the rapid rise of hooliganism and organized violence. The "Barras Bravas" are groups of violent individuals who are involved in the support of soccer clubs throughout South America, but primarily in Argentina.<sup>105</sup> In La Boca, the "Barras Bravas" group that is a major concern is an organization known as La Doce, which reportedly has over 2000 members.<sup>106</sup> The organization has been known to have an appalling track record with regard to use of clubs and knives during Boca matches.<sup>107</sup> In many ways, La Boca is representative of many communities in Argentina and the rest of South America; thus the community is an excellent location for a violence prevention program.

#### *Needs assessment*

The needs assessment will fully integrate the community into the design of the program. Though the community proposed for program intervention is the La Boca neighborhood, the goal is to minimize the violence in Argentina as a whole. Buenos Aires will serve as the focus for the needs assessment since it is the area where most violence occurs. The needs of the community will be examined using a multi-step process that includes: (1) focus group development and round table discussions concerning soccer in Argentina, (2) survey development and distribution in the community, (3) collection of supporting data concerning soccer violence from police, hospital, soccer federation, media and stadium/club reports, and (4) data analysis of survey results.

### *Suggestions for developing a program*

The first step will be to develop a focus group of individuals from the program development team and individuals within the targeted community. The goal is to collect data in a way that will be sensitive to the community and benefit the community. The focus group will include stakeholders from throughout the community, to ensure that the whole community's needs are understood, not just those who are perceived as primary stakeholders. These will include individuals from law enforcement and emergency services, as well as business leaders, education leaders, and soccer federation officials. Several at large members will come from the community and from the greater Buenos Aires area. The focus groups will be promoted as meetings to discuss "soccer in Argentina". They will meet over the course of a month and will be asked to discuss the soccer matches and spectators, and determine if there is a problem. Program experts will be in attendance at these meetings and will meet at the end of the meeting to discuss the input from the community. The community will also be involved by volunteering their input as to what may be an adequate response to the problem of spectator violence.

From this information individuals will be assembled from within the research community of Argentina in order to develop a survey to address community needs with regards to soccer violence. A list will be compiled of the sectors of the



community that should be included in the survey and the questions that should be included as well as information that should be solicited. This survey will use the input from the focus group and will be reviewed by the groups prior to the final drafting. The survey will be distributed solely in the community of La Boca, since this is the focus community and resources will come from funds that have been allocated to the program from all sources expected to contribute. The funding will be discussed in a later section.

The survey will focus on four main issues: 1) Whether or not there is a problem with violence in Argentina? 2) What are some of the problems, if the respondent believes there is a problem? 3) What are the causes for this, if the respondent believes there is a problem? 4) Has the respondent been involved in or been the victim of soccer related violence? Also included in the survey will be sex, age, occupation, and soccer loyalties if relevant. Following construction of a survey that has been endorsed by the focus groups and by the research and ethics board, governing Argentina, the survey will be introduced to the public. The survey will be conducted door to door throughout Buenos Aires by trained surveyors and will occur over 1 month.

Other sources of information to be included in the data analysis will also be identified. Data will be collected from at least 5 sources. First, police data from Buenos Aires consisting of reports and records concerned with soccer related violence for the last ten years, will be examined. These reports will be assessed

with relation to categories utilized in assessments of British soccer violence, such as: violent disorder (assault etc.), public disorder, throwing missiles, running on the field, and alcohol offenses. The second data source used will be that of hospital admissions for soccer related injuries and deaths. Emergency medicine charts will be reviewed as well as ambulance and medic reports. A coding scheme will be developed prior to implementation in order to identify injuries that fit the criteria of soccer spectator related injuries. A third resource will be the Argentine Soccer Association, which is the governing board of the sport in the country. The information gained will be supplemented by information from individual stadiums concerning violence. Published media reports concerned with violence and injury in regards to Argentine soccer will also be used. These sources are reliable since there is constant surveillance of the sport in Argentina and crowd behavior is constantly reported on. The final source is published information put forward by scholars on the subjects of sport, soccer, and violence.

The information will be analyzed to explore the scope of the problem of violence related to Argentine soccer, to determine the feelings of the population concerning this violence, and the perceived causes. Descriptive statistics such as injuries and deaths per thousand can be obtained, as well as arrests and violent events per match. Inferential statistics will also be derived such as odds ratios and incidence ratios concerning soccer related violence in this target community.

### ***Overview of the program***

A recent report by WHO has called for the US and other nations to use options other than incarceration to curb violence and to treat the issue as a public health problem that requires a public health solution. Prevention programs are more cost effective than other options, and the proposed program will take this approach.<sup>108</sup> Prothrow-Stith has stressed the importance of comprehensive strategies and new partnerships, using disciplines other than law enforcement and trying public health strategies when to develop successful violence prevention programs.<sup>109</sup> The proposed program will consist of a multi- pronged approach that is consistent with many successful prevention programs and will incorporate several different groups in Argentine society.

The program will include primary, secondary, and tertiary interventions packaged together. The four pronged approach will enlist involvement from four key areas (private sector, public sector, media, and the community) and solutions originating from these four areas. Each area will have specific inputs and outputs that will be defined, and each will be responsible for specific interventions.

### ***Identification of program theory***

Behavioral modification is the focus of this program theory. This is based on the conclusion that so much of this problem in Argentina is due to many behaviors that have become a part of the soccer experience and have never been addressed, nor dissuaded. The proposed program is based on the following

theoretical reasoning about soccer violence in La Boca. Spectator violence in Argentina is due to a minority of fans who look at the violence as a way to defend their turf from opposing fans, in an environment in which violence is a prevalent part of daily life. The violence is compounded by organized fans known as "Barras Bravas", who have decided that fanship is based on intimidation and violence against other fans. All of this violence takes place in and around poorly maintained stadiums, where fan management is inadequate and police and stadium security is not very effective. There is a lack of resources, manpower, strict laws, and leadership that deter violence. There has also never been a comprehensive attempt at quelling or even researching the issue of fan violence and this has enabled violence to become a significant part of the spectator experience. The media have compounded the problem by magnifying the violence and its place in Argentine society. In this fragile economic environment, many are fearful and mistrusting of the historically corrupt government and the legal system. In conclusion, there are five main sources from which violence originates:

- 1) Instigation by a poorly trained and overpowered police force.
- 2) Fan groups such as the "Barras Bravas" which have promoted violence as a characteristic of spectatorship.
- 3) Poor involvement by governing bodies, individual clubs, and sponsors on the issue of spectator violence with regards to stadium improvements, security supplementation, and other prevention strategies.

- 4) A government that has failed to address the issue of violence by stricter laws, prevention campaigns, and research on the issue.
- 5) Media that magnify the issue by sensationalizing the violent events and ensuring their place as a characteristic of the game.

### ***Program context***

Because of the scope of the problem of spectator violence in Argentina, this proposed program should be well received by Argentine society. It is a positive step towards improving the public health of the citizens. Soccer and the clubs involved are dear to Argentina, and plans to make the game safer for individuals and remove the element that detracts attention from the game itself should be welcomed. There are some factors and challenges that must be considered when developing the program plan with a multi-pronged approach. This multi-pronged approach will integrate several facets of this community that consists of the media, public sector, private sector, and the community in order to change the social and environmental factors that may be an underlying cause in the problem of spectator violence.

### ***Political environment***

Recently, the main focus of the government has been the economy, which saw a drastic downturn in 2000-2001. The subsequent recession was devastating for the government and directed attention away from the soccer violence issue. In the last year, a new president has been elected and the country has finally rebounded

from the economic problems of the last few years. This makes the environment much more positive for program implementation. One problem continues to be to be the political influence of the "Barras Bravas", who contribute largely to the problem. The group and its leadership will be integrated into the program planning as stakeholders.

### ***Social environment***

Violence is a large part of daily society in Buenos Aires, and more specifically La Boca. In this environment, support for the violence-reduction program may be difficult to elicit. Fortunately people are very community oriented. Within areas such as La Boca and other neighborhoods in Buenos Aires, there is a lot of civic and community pride. The widespread support for the game of soccer makes the population one in which a violence prevention program should have a good chance at success. Also, with the improving economy, citizens may have more commitment to the initiative.

### ***Program Support***

There have been numerous calls by politicians and judges for programs to cope with the spectator violence in Argentina. The problem has been that interventions have been rejected or never acted upon. This is possibly due to the fact that the interventions always focused on one facet of society such as the judiciary and stricter laws, or the soccer clubs and the call for closed circuit television. There seems to be no evidence of proposals concerning a well thought

out program that integrated the many different stakeholders, who all shared the responsibility and costs of implementing a program. This proposed program would bring together, community, police, soccer clubs, media, and government all in an effort to reduce the amount of spectator violence. I believe that this integrated approach will be widely accepted by the stakeholders, due to the sharing of costs and the use of an approach that relies on prevention and involvement from multiple facets within the community. It would be hard for the government to argue with the recent calls by WHO to reduce global violence and to treat it as a true public health problem.<sup>110</sup>

### ***Challenges***

Corruption and government/ police distrust appears to be a major concern of the population. Therefore to some segments of society, such as the "Barras Bravas," this program may not be considered important. In past there have been many demands from many different segments of the population, to acknowledge and rectify the violence issue, and therefore suggests broad support. As people are educated as to the scope of the issue and the discrepancy between events in Argentina and the rest of the soccer world, many in this society would encourage and involve themselves in a violence prevention program.

### ***Development of Program Objectives and Goals***

Focus groups that will be involved in the needs assessment will also be used to develop goals and objectives for the program. The planning process will allow

for goals and objectives that remain fluid in order to use input from the many stakeholders to decide what issues the program should focus on. There will also be input from all involved in determining the best indicators of success or failure during the evaluation of the program. These goals have been derived from three measures that could be used to determine if a reduction of violence has been realized following initiation of the program. A preliminary list of goals and objectives are as follows:

- 1) Reduce instances of soccer related violence in matches involving the Boca Juniors Soccer Club and the La Boca community. Soccer violence will be defined by the program as violent events that occur within 10 hours of the start and 10 hours following the finish of any soccer match held at Camilo Chichero Stadium involving the Boca Juniors Soccer Club.
- 2) Reduce instances of injury as a result of spectator violence in matches involving the Boca Juniors Soccer Club and the La Boca community. Injuries as a result of spectator violence will be those that occur within 10 hours of the start and 10 hours following the finish of any soccer match held at Camilo Chichero Stadium involving the Boca Juniors Soccer Club
- 3) To reduce the number of deaths as a result of soccer violence in matches involving the Boca Juniors Soccer Club and the La Boca community. Deaths as a result of spectator violence will be those that occur within 10 hours before



the start of a match and 10 hours following the finish of any match at Camilo Chichero involving the Boca Juniors Soccer Club.

### ***Technological feasibility***

The technology involved in the program will be minimal; therefore this should not be a barrier to success. Data collection will require some computer technology, but not any unique technology. The primary technology costs will come from the installation of closed circuit television in the stadium, to monitor fans. This will require monitoring cameras and a control room with video receivers and recording equipment. Another technology expense will be the installation of metal detectors at entrance sites, as well as hand-held units. The Boca Juniors Soccer Club, the Argentina Soccer Association, and the federal government will share these costs.

### ***Political feasibility***

One concern with the program planning is the sacred nature of the sport of soccer in Argentina. No programs in the past have been developed to cope with the problem of violence, for fear of alienation of fans or supporter groups. However, a partnership involving police, community, supporter groups, government, media, the judicial system and the clubs and governing bodies themselves will make the program and groups involved much less vulnerable to repercussions. Also, the economy is improving, which has been a major focus of the government; thus it will be possible now to pay attention to the violence.

Finally, the club supporter groups, which are heavily involved in politics, will be included in focus groups and the project in order to guarantee their support and avoid their possible resistance to reform.

### ***Relevance for social priorities and desire for change***

Many in the media have been critical of the violence in Argentine soccer. Individuals have pointed out the lack of leadership on the issue of violence, as well as the failure of the judicial system to create and uphold laws that could be used as a deterrent. It is a social priority of the World Health Organization to reduce violence throughout the world and this provides even more reason to cope with an issue that leads to countless injuries and lives lost. Education of the community on the scope of the problem will reinforce the needs for a program to reduce violent events.

### ***Costs***

The primary costs for this program will include the technology costs, which consist of closed circuit television and metal detectors, the expense of manpower for more police and stadium security at matches, and stadium improvements such as making the stadium all-seating. The Boca Junior Soccer Club and the Argentina Soccer Association, the federal and local governments, and finally the sponsors will share these costs. The local media will be expected to help by donating media time to bring awareness of the program. Research costs should be

minimal, and the staff should not be large. There will also be future costs due to stricter laws and punishments that will be imposed on perpetrators, but these should lessen once the desired deterrent effect occurs.

### **Program Implementation**

As stated earlier the program will include primary, secondary, and tertiary interventions packaged together and the four pronged approach will enlist involvement from four key areas: media, public sector, private sector and the community. The goal of the program is to intervene in areas that have been designated as contributing to the problem of spectator violence, based on review of the literature. The program will begin 6 months prior to the beginning of the professional soccer season in Argentina. It will consist of primary interventions such as metal detectors and closed caption television in the stadiums, secondary interventions such as education programs for police and community members, and tertiary interventions including a media campaign.

The inputs of these four groups: media, public sector, private sector, and community are outlined below:

#### ***Media***

As discussed earlier in the paper, the media have played a large part in the build-up of violence problem in Argentine soccer. There will be three main expectations of this program sector:

1. Media will be asked to donate advertising and media time spots within the La Boca community to bring attention to the problem of violence by bringing attention to deaths, injuries, and costs of these problems to the community. A proper template for reporting and the amount required by each media outlet will be provided prior to the beginning of the program.
2. Donated advertising space will be requested to bring attention to the anti-violence campaign in order to help educate the community, empower the community, and encourage the community to help with the reduction of violence. A proper template for reporting and the amount required by each media outlet will be provided prior to the beginning of the program.
3. Sports editors should be aware of the inflammatory impact that sensationalistic reporting has on the issue of violence, and will be expected to educate their staff writers and editors and show them that this type of reporting is not acceptable. The editors of the media sources will oversee respective media sources will oversee the policing and education of their staff members, and a board made up of editors representing a wide range of media outlets will police the industry as a whole within the targeted community.

### ***Public sector***

The public sector has had very little involvement in the past, with Argentine soccer violence. Judges have had a difficult time upholding stricter laws and no increase in police presence has been attempted. These are interventions that have

been effective elsewhere and they should be a large part of the public sector focus in this program. The public sector expectations are as follows:

1. A series of targeted project meetings including public officials such as judges, public health officials, police leadership, politicians, and government officials will hold regular meetings on the problem and the proposed program. It will be the duty of these focus groups to aid in discovering any shortcomings in the program and to provide weekly press releases on the problem and the program, while holding regular correspondence with colleagues as to the state of the problem and the program.
2. The local government will be lobbied by the program leadership to allocate funds to contribute to violence prevention. These funds will be used along with contributions from other sources to aid with improvements to the stadiums, including seating and closed circuit television. Providing more police, as well as education programs, will also be priorities.
3. The department of police will be expected to develop an training program, with guidance from the program planners that will focus on soccer violence and prevention. The curriculum will include examination of the violence instigation by police, quick response to violent fans, search tactics, and use of CCTV among other topics. All police who are to be used in a soccer security capacity will be

expected to complete the provided course before being allowed access to this duty.

4. The police department will introduce a task force made up of a large sector of the community who will investigate possible police problems with regards to fan treatment and instigation of violence. This task force will be expected to provide a process to investigate these transgressions and the penalties that will result, prior to the start of the campaign. Finally, the task force will be expected to monitor policing of events and respond quickly to reports of police misuse of force and episodes of violence in which the police are involved.

5. The judicial system will be expected to uphold the laws that have been passed, and a monitoring board will be involved in following decisions and penalties inflicted on violators of soccer violence policies. The judicial system will be made aware of decisions in a timely manner and made aware of past inconsistencies in judicial decisions and sentencing through program educators.

6. The judicial system will also attempt to set up a magistrate system, which has been used in other countries to process violators immediately following infractions. These magistrates will be employed on the stadium grounds and will be present at all matches. Signage and media will alert the spectators to this system.

7. A commission will be created within local, municipal, and federal governmental bodies that will be concerned with soccer violence in the targeted

community. These commissions will work closely with the program itself to raise awareness, concerning the elected bodies of the program and the scope of the problem. These bodies will be in a sub- department under larger departments such as Department of Public Health or Department of Public Safety. Included in the agenda will be the beginnings of legislation to develop an academic and research institution, which will investigate and monitor the problem of spectator violence within the Argentine community.

#### ***Private sector***

The private sector is the next area in which interventions will be included. There has been little action in this sector, which includes the governing body of Argentine soccer, the clubs themselves, and the companies who are involved in sponsoring specific clubs such as Boca and advertise throughout the stadium. The lack of action with regards to the violence issue, has most likely been due to expenses, which would not be shared and would be placed on a single entity such as the soccer club. In the past there were no partnerships with others in the private sector and with other areas such as government and the community. In this program proposal, the expectations for this sector are as follows:

1. Stadium improvements are the most important expectation for this part of the program. The owners of the stadiums and clubs will be asked to contribute to a fund that will include monies from the sponsors and the governing body, as well

as other corporate and government contributions. This fund will be used by the program to provide seating in the stadium in previous all- standing areas, to install metal detectors and provide hand held detectors to security personnel, and to provide closed circuit camera and monitoring equipment to the stadium.

2. The club and stadium will also use monies to employ more stewards who will be dispersed throughout the stadium to add to an already increased police presence. The duty of these stewards is to watch for unruly behavior and to discourage this behavior by their presence.

3. The club and governing bodies will draft rules that will address violence issues in the stadium and general vicinity. The rules will be accompanied by penalties that can be applied to the infractions. Penalties will include expulsion and permanent barring from the grounds in question, as well as others governed by the Argentine Soccer Association.

4. The club, advertisers, and governing body will provide signage that will alert spectators to violence issues, the state of violence, and stadium rules and penalties.

5. Advertisers will be expected to include promotion of the anti-violence campaign in their advertising budgets for the La Boca community, Boca Juniors soccer club, and Cinchero Stadium.

6. The governing body and the stadium authority will be expected to enforce a no-alcohol policy on the stadium grounds. This policy appears to be in place in



several Argentine stadiums, but poorly enforced. Educating the stewards, police, and stadium officials who enforce the alcohol policy, about the negative effect that alcohol has on spectator violence will be necessary. Also, responding accordingly to those who fail to recognize regulations may ensure enforcement. It should be included in security education, signage, and rules that result in penalties.

7. A violence task force will be instituted within the La Boca Soccer Club, with close involvement with the violence commission of the governing body. This task force will also interact with fan groups, such as Barras Bravas and other club members, to develop positive dialogues and encourage spectator support and empowerment within the violence prevention program.

### *Community*

Finally, the fourth facet of the program will focus on the La Boca community. This is an important part of the program that will enlist the involvement of those most affected by the problem. The community will be empowered, educated, and become true stakeholders in the success of this prevention program. The interventions are as follows:

1. A schedule of weekly meetings will be held in the community at a set time, where individuals within the community can voice their concerns about soccer violence. There will also be an anonymous communication outlet that will constantly be open in order to ensure that all opinions may be heard. These meetings will involve individuals representing all facets of the program in order that they can understand the issues from a fan and community point of view, and also allow the community a sense of partnership and reassurance of some actions. These meetings will begin in the months before the start of the season and continue through the duration of the season.
2. With assistance from the prevention program coordinators, the community will be involved in developing and presenting a curriculum that will address the violence. This will be presented at youth soccer programs and in the schools. There should be at least one presentation of the program within each school in the La Boca community during the inaugural year of the prevention program
3. The community will enlist church leaders and other community organizations to present an organized education and informational program, provided by the program organization, to address the violence issue.
4. A support symbol will be created, similar to the ribbons worn to show HIV/AIDS awareness. This will be developed and provided by the plan organizers to the community and will be marketed within the community as a symbol of support, recognition, and reminder of the violence prevention program.

### ***Organization***

The interventions will be organized through the specific sectors where designated people will act as coordinators, managers, and educators. This includes a grassroots community based approach that will include volunteers at many levels, such as the judiciary, police, politicians, club and governing body officials, and community activists. There will be salaried employees at the organizational level who will staff the offices of the program to coordinate weekly meetings, ensure distribution of materials, and monitor of each sector and the volunteer leadership. These individuals will monitor expectations rigorously and will report directly to the directors, who will be made up of individuals from each sector, as well as those from the program itself.

### ***Funding***

Funding, as discussed earlier, will come from five main sources: (1) the federal government, (2) local government, (3) La Boca Soccer Club, (4) the Argentine Soccer Association, (5) and corporate contributions that will include club sponsorships. Donated advertising from media sources will also be expected and arranged. The primary costs will be the stadium improvements, which consist of seating, metal detectors, and camera installations. Another cost will be the increased police presence and steward enrollment. Educational costs will be minimal since the program will be uniform and most educator costs will be small due to the enlistment of volunteers. The program should not be a problem to fund

since there will be contributions of funds from several sectors, which that will share the costs. Contributions will be decided on following an analysis of projected costs, which was not performed for this paper. The contributions will be relative to the entities and their ability to contribute. Most likely, the largest percentage of funds will come from the federal government and the Soccer Association and the smallest contributor will be the Boca Club. This is based on the fact that the government and the Argentine Soccer Association have a larger amount of funds to draw from and the club itself is a much smaller entity. Also, this is a pilot program that may be adopted in other locales and Boca is the trial site. It would not be prudent to expect the club to be responsible for a large part of the costs. Funding will need to be addressed and allocated prior to the start of the program.

### **Evaluation plan**

In order to ensure that the program has been effective and beneficial to the stakeholders, a portion of the funding will be reserved for the development and implementation of an impact evaluation plan that will measure outcomes that are concerned with the three main objectives, discussed earlier in this paper. These objectives are as follows: (1) Reduction of soccer related violence with regards to matches involving the Boca Juniors Soccer Club and the La Boca community. (2) Reduction of injuries, resulting from spectator violence, at Boca Juniors matches

and within the La Boca community. (3) Reduction of the number of deaths as a result of soccer violence with regards to matches involving the Boca Juniors and the La Boca community.

These three objectives are concerned solely with the reduction of these episodes therefore the evaluation question will be to determine if the reduction has been recognized following implementation of the prevention program. In order to measure these outcomes, a comparison with prior soccer seasons requiring retrospective collection of baseline statistics concerned with these three objectives. The information will contain statistics from the 5 years prior to implementation of the program. This information will then be compared with data that has been collected throughout the period of time following implementation and during the practice of this prevention program. With regards to the reduction of soccer related violence, information concerned with these episodes will come from four sources: 1) police reports 2) media reports 3) AFA (Argentina Soccer Association) reports, and 4) Boca Juniors Soccer Club reports. With regards to the reduction of injury during soccer matches, this data will be collected from four sources: 1) emergency rooms, clinics, and hospitals within the immediate catchment area 2) stadium first aid stations and stadium medical personnel 3) police reports 4) Boca Juniors Soccer Club reporting. And finally, data related to a possible reduction of deaths during Boca Junior soccer matches, will be collected from three sources: 1) hospital coroner reports 2) police reports and 3)

media reports. Coding will be developed for medical and police reporting that will designate episodes that qualify as spectator violence. Timeframe surrounding soccer matches, location, witness and patient reporting will all enter into the coding process. This will be developed prior to the implementation of the program. This information will be collected by members of an evaluation team which will be expected to adhere to this "coding criteria." This coded information will be collected and analyzed at points that will have been determined prior to implementation. This will most likely be quarterly.

Also, the evaluation will require that process objectives be measured to determine how well the individuals involved in the program work together and how easily the plan has been to implement. Also, the evaluators will determine how well coordinated, involved, and utilized the program has been for stakeholders who make up sectors involved in the four-pronged approach. This information will come from organized records of work hours, planning and education roles, interviews, and surveys.

Along with measurement of the efficiency and effectiveness of the program, the goal of the evaluation will be to ensure funding and to recognize issues that need attention in order to guarantee the survival and effectiveness of the program.

### ***Likelihood of health gains***

The goal of the program is to reduce violent events and injuries and deaths as a result of these events. The program will use many interventions that have been

used in other locations and will rely on several groups within the community to implement these initiatives in a coordinated group effort. Many of the WHO recommendations on violence prevention will be used since one integrated approach is based on public health, which balances law enforcement and judicial personnel with other community resources. The CDC funds prevention programs because of the belief that they are more cost effective and more successful as a result of collaboration between civic, political, and societal groups. These programs have had success in Europe and Great Britain and have reduced the numbers of violent events and casualties in the locations where introduced.

### ***Measurement of health gains***

Health measures, to be collected following the implementation of this program, include comparisons of violent events and injuries and deaths as a result of soccer events following the program implementations with these same statistics and media reports from previous years. This information is not very complete, and therefore a control site will be designated as well, where identical statistics will be collected during the year of the program. These will be compared with the La Boca statistics at a specific time.

### ***Applicability to other sites***

The focus of this intervention is on one site, which includes a specific soccer club and community. This site is very similar to other sites in the country. One location in particular, River Plate, will be used as a control site in order to

measure health gains and evaluate the program. There are numerous other communities in which the program could be adopted, and that is a goal of the program. The ultimate goal is country- wide expansion, if the program is found to be effective. Alterations are possible if interventions are found to be ineffective or cost prohibitive during the evaluation.

### **Conclusion/Discussion**

In conclusion, this paper has shown that the problem of spectator violence during soccer matches is a very common problem throughout the world and nowhere has this problem been more pronounced than in Argentina and South America where at time the problem seems to be epidemic. The problem of the violence leads to high rates of morbidity and mortality that at times overshadows the primary event. This problem needs to be addressed in order to minimize the impact on the communities in which these events take place. It is important for prevention experts to recognize the causes of soccer violence when deciding on initiatives and a program framework that can be used to try and eradicate this public health problem. In Argentina, it appears that a program with a multi-pronged approach will fit the needs for this unique community. Social issues such as the "hooligan factor", poor stadium planning, police violence, and paucity of laws to control the problem all contribute. Therefore utilizing a model which has been adopted by other violence prevention programs which integrates several



different groups within the community and focuses on prevention would be expected to be most effective.

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